DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 395 982 TM 025 144

AUTHOR Jordan, Robert P.
TITLE Searching for Information on Tests: Reference Sources and a Search Strategy. Iowa Testing Programs Occasional Papers Number 38.
INSTITUTION Iowa Testing Programs, Iowa City.
PUB DATE Mar 96
NOTE 23p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bibliographies; Databases; *Educational Testing; *Reference Materials; Resource Materials; *Search Strategies; Social Science Research; *Tests; Test Use; *User Needs (Information)

ABSTRACT

Research methodologies in several of the social sciences require the use of tests. When assisting social science researchers who seek information on tests, reference librarians do not, themselves, always have direct access to the instruments. Librarians should not only have the knowledge that various print and electronic database resources are available to gain needed information, but they should also have a strategy by which these sources can be searched in an expedient and thorough manner. This paper offers a search strategy that can be used with the materials commonly found in a large research or specialized test library. The search strategy is presented in a flow chart that suggests test bibliographies and reviews for published instruments and other sources for unpublished experimental measures. (Contains the flowchart and 48 references.) (Author/SLD)

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IOWA TESTING PROGRAMS OCCASIONAL PAPERS

Number 38 —March 1996

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Searching for Information on Tests: Reference Sources and a Search Strategy

Robert P. Jordan

SUMMARY. Research methodologies in several of the social sciences require the use of tests. When assisting social science researchers who seek information on tests, reference librarians do not, themselves, always have direct access to the instruments. Librarians should not only have the knowledge that various print and electronic database resources are available to gain needed information, but they should also have a strategy by which these sources can be searched in an expedient and thorough manner. This paper offers such a search strategy which can be used with the materials commonly found in a large research or a specialized test library.

Not every social science researcher will have easy access to the many psychological and educational tests and measurements available from both commercial publishers or in the journal literature. But most large research and specialized tests libraries maintain collections of reference materials which offer pertinent information on these instruments. Reference librarians should have a search strategy in mind when researchers, unfamiliar with the many resources on tests, present themselves at the reference desk. And often the patron asking for assistance may have little in the way of bibliographic information with which to begin a search.

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Within the last twenty-five years, librarians and one subject specialist have contributed to the literature on test libraries and their management. Several librarians have written extensively on the areas of collection building, bibliographic control, technical processing, and circulation policies and procedures in regard to commercially published tests. Simmons (1979), Ginn and O'Brien (1985), and the Ad hoc Subcommittee on Test Collections of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries (1985) have all published tracts which are mainly restricted in coverage to the accession and circulation of tests. McGiverin (1990) includes a short section concerning the print and database sources available when working with a test collection in an academic setting. In a more narrowly focused article, Jordan (1991) wrote about improving the access and retrieval of personality tests held in a library's collection.

Except indirectly by what sources they included in their bibliographies, none of these publications were concerned with search strategies for finding information on tests.

There are, however, a few publications having some bearing on developing such a search strategy. Backer (1972, 1977) wrote two guides that, though somewhat dated, are still useful in researching older tests. The later of the two publications (Backer, 1977, p.6-7) has a section with a heading, *Strategies for using these sources*. But he confesses that he makes no attempt "to present a detailed strategy for use of the information sources described" within his report. Mitchell (1987) advises librarians in the optimal ways to use the *Mental Measurements Yearbook* series (*MMYB*) and other publications developed at the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. After his discussion of the Buros Institute's publications, Mitchell has some suggestions for librarians regarding their attempts to answer patrons' questions about tests. His advice is mainly directed toward how librarians ought to use the various characteristics (i.e., indexes) found in the *MMYB*. He also recommends that librarians should be conversant in the jargon of measurement. But he does not delve into any of the many other resources, besides the Buros Institutes', which may be of use to the reference librarian.

Rudner and Dorko (1989) have developed a one-sheet annotated bibliography of sources for finding information on commercially published, standardized tests. When read in conjunction with *Finding Non-Commercial Tests* by Crosby-Muilenburg (1989), another one-sheet annotated bibliography, researchers become aware of the many available sources for finding information on mental measurements of all kinds. Helpful as these documents are, they make no attempt to establish a detailed hierarchy among the sources for developing a search strategy to find information on a particular test.

Fabiano and O'Brien (1987) have developed a guide covering more than 150 monographs, journals, indexes, and on-line computer databases which provide information on tests utilized by educators. Crosby-Muilenburg (1988) has also written a guide to materials that cover both educational and psychological tests. Though developed for patrons of the Humboldt State University Library, that institutions' collection mirrors what any large research or special testing library's holdings should contain. But in this guide, Crosby-Muilenburg does not propose any search strategy that researchers or librarians, unfamiliar with such resources, might employ.

PURPOSE

It is a rare day at the Iowa Testing Programs library when the staff is not given the last name of a test's author (with no first name or initial and only a vague idea of what

variables the test is supposed to measure) and asked to find extensive information on the test. After a brief reference interview conducted by the librarian, the searcher might be able to produce a specific citation in which the instrument is mentioned. Information gleaned from that citation, most notably the date of publication of the article or book, can give the librarian a solid point of reference from which to begin a search. But just as often the searcher, in a one-sided conversation with a professor or colleague, has only been able to jot down a last name and has no idea how long ago this instrument first appeared in print. It is with such sparse information that many reference librarians must attempt to wade through the many applicable print sources and computer databases.

ELECTRONIC DATABASES

The rapid development of information networks via the World Wide Web has made obsolete most recent articles on searching electronic databases. When written, *Searching Electronic Databases to Locate Tests and Measures* (Voge, 1994) was an excellent overview of electronic database sources available to find information about tests. Because of the time lag between the manuscript's submission and its publication, much of what Voge wrote is no longer applicable, including her discussion of using the Mental Measurements Yearbook Database (MMYD) to find information on published measures (p.76). Any claims of availability for other such electronic databases in this paper might soon prove outdated because of the advent of greater and more complex technologies. For a brief discussion of the availability of earlier technologies, see a previous edition of this paper (Jordan, 1995).

While searching the World Wide Web using Infoseek©, the staff at the ITP library found the following web sites of interest to researchers:

1) http://www.unl.edu/buros/home.html
2) http://www.cua.edu/www/eric_ae/testcol.html
3) http://www.apa.org/science/test.html

The first address is for the home page of The Buros Institute of Mental Measurements at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. From this site, the researcher may learn what publications are available from the Institute, including which of its works are offered on CD-ROM. The second address is for the ERIC/AE Test Locator. According to information acquired from this site in February 1996, users may access the following databases:

1) Educational Testing Service (ETS) Test Collection database

2) Buros Test Review Locator

3) PRO-ED Test Review Locator

4) PRO-ED Test Publisher Locator

The third address links the researcher to "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on Psychological Tests," which is a project of the Science Directorate of the American Psychological Association. It is an eleven page introduction to sources of information, both print and electronic, in a question-and-answer format.

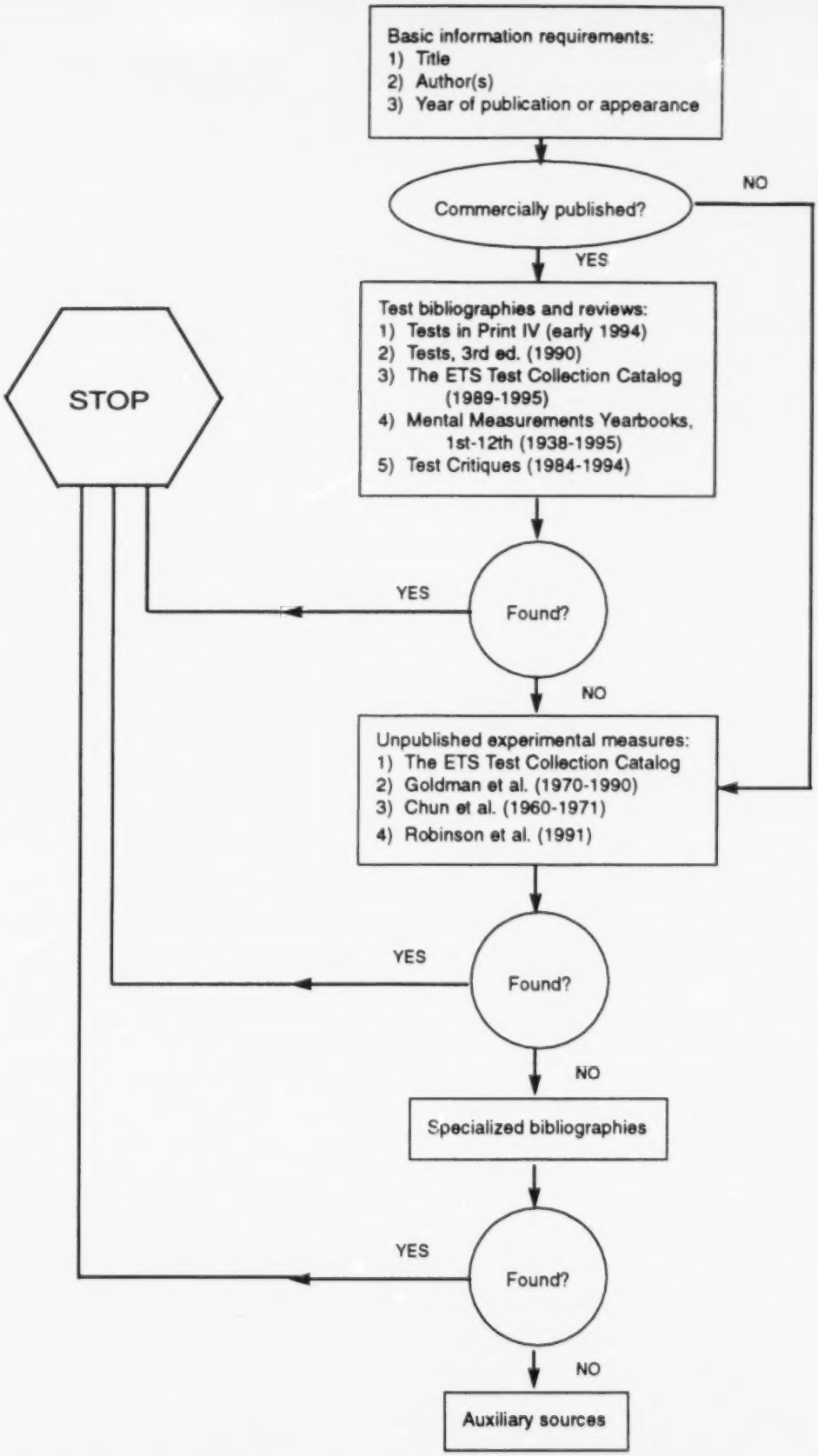
Due to high usage or the caprices of electronic networks, these web sites are not always available. Even when accessible, these sites act, for the most part, as indexes for print sources, such as *MMYB*. Organizations that publish print sources corresponding to these databases, such as the Buros Institute, PRO-ED, and the American Psychological Association, are hesitant to make available information for free on the World Wide Web. Therefore, for librarians and researchers, there is no substitute for minimal competence in using test-oriented print sources.

PRINT SOURCES

Before consulting the various print sources available in the fields of educational and psychological testing, searchers must try to answer the following question about the instruments about which they are seeking information: Is the test a commercially published product, or is it an experimental measure incorporated in a journal or monograph? This question is important because several of the print sources I discuss in this article use this distinction for a test's inclusion. In the introduction to *The Twelfth Mental Measurements Yearbook* (Conoley & Impara, 1995), the editors indicate that instruments covered in the book are restricted to "commercially available tests, new or revised, published as separates for use with English-speaking subjects" (p.*xi*). The editors and authors of other sources, such as the *Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Measures* (Goldman, Saunders, Busch, Osborne, & Mitchell, 1974-1995), "recognized the need for the publication of a directory to experimental test instruments, i.e., tests that are not currently marketed commercially" (v.5, p.*ix*). By knowing whether a particular test is commercially available, the librarian is able to pare down the number of possible sources in which to look for information.

Specialized test bibliographies, covered later in this article, may be structured around single broad variables (i.e., sex-role, self-esteem, vocational interests, etc.) and often

FIGURE 1: Search Strategy for Finding Information on Tests



include both commercially published and experimental measures. These specialized bibliographies may be further restricted in coverage by their editors' biases or publishers' space limitations, and they are sometimes not all-inclusive.

The staff at the Iowa Testing Programs library has found the flow chart in Figure 1 useful in dealing with questions concerning tests. It also is used in bibliographic instruction with graduate students enrolled in measurement classes at the University of Iowa. Other researchers, besides librarians, can use this chart not only to familiarize themselves with the print sources available in test librarianship, but also to help in developing an efficient search pattern among the array of basic materials in test bibliography.

This search strategy begins with at least one of the three *Basic Information Requirements* listed at the top of the flow chart. Success in uncovering further specifics about a test is enhanced if the searcher has two or all three of the requisite bits of background information. Next, the searchers must ask themselves whether the test is commercially published. The answer can halve the number of sources they consult. If the the answer is "I don't know," the default response should be "yes," so that no source of information is overlooked. Should a search of materials on published tests prove fruitless, then searchers proceed down the chart to sources on experimental instruments or to specialized bibliographies of tests if such materials exist.

In most cases, the dates which follow some of the resources in the flow chart are their publication dates. The editors of some of the materials, such as the six-volume *Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Measures* (Goldman, Saunders, Busch, Osborne, & Mitchell, 1974-1995), have indicated the years of coverage in their introductions, and these dates are reflected in the flow chart. Otherwise, it has been left up to the users to take into consideration the time lag between a final manuscript's submission and the actual year of a book's publication.

The best way to show how this flow chart works is to use an example. As indicated above, the searcher often has only an author's last name and an incomplete title as beginning information. In this example, a graduate student asks for further information on the *Johnson's PNM scale*, which a professor mentioned hurriedly at the end of a seminar in family counseling. The professor has left town to attend a convention, leaving the student and the librarian to the vagaries of the reference sources available. The librarian questions the student further, yielding the dubious information that the professor said he saw it "quite a few years ago," and it was designed to define parent-child relationships. This information, along with knowing that the student's seminar is one in

family counseling, gives the librarian some insight into what variables the scale might assess. Although it is dangerous to assume anything, the librarian and searcher might also reasonably deduce that the *P* in the acronym, PNM, might stand for *parent* or any of its permutations (i.e., parental, parenting, etc.). Therefore, the librarian now has an author's last name, an acronym of an instrument's title, and a vague idea of the construct assessed with the PNM scale.

The next stage in utilizing the flow chart is to ask this all-important question: Is the test under consideration commercially published or an experimental measure? In this case, the student has so little information on the test that he does not know. The safest procedure is to assume that it is a commercially published test and continue down the flow chart to the first group of test bibliographies and collections of reviews. In this discussion of reference materials, there will be no attempt to explore every aspect of each source. Instead, emphasis is on those characteristics of the materials that help librarians quickly locate any requested bibliographic information (authors, titles, publishers, and dates of publications) and/or critiques and technical data for specific tests.

TEST BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND REVIEWS

Most searches should begin with the source incorporating bibliographic information on nearly all commercially published tests in print in the English language, *Tests in Print IV* (Murphy, Conoley & Impara, 1994). Most instruments published in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and India are included. Arranged alphabetically by title in the book's main section, each test is assigned an entry number. These numbers, and not the page numbers on which the entries are printed, are used in the many indexes found in the back of *Tests in Print IV* (hereafter referred to as *TIP IV*). Among the indexes are those for authors' names (both for the tests and for bibliographical references cited in the entries), test titles, subjects, publishers, scores (i.e., variables tested), and acronyms of test titles. In the example of the PNM scale, a quick look at the name index yields several dozen Johnsons. Even if the librarian checked only those Johnsons labeled as being authors of tests, the task would still be time-consuming. The index of acronyms, though, might appear more useful because that is one specific bit of information the librarian has. But there is no PNM or JPNM (for Johnson's PNM) listed in this. The only other feasible access point *TIP IV* might have for this instrument is the *score index*.

As mentioned above, *parent*, or its derivations, might be a part of the test's title and, hence, a part of the formally stated variable being tested in the PNM. But there are nearly

as many entries in the score index under permutations of parent as there are under Johnson in the name index. Experienced users of the score index have found out that there is no vocabulary control as there is in a thesaurus or an established list of subject headings. The wording of variables in the score index entry reflects what the author has declared, usually in the test manual, the variable(s) to be. There are no cross references (e.g., from *offspring* to *children*), so the user must be prepared to look under every possible cognate.

To be certain that Johnson's PNM is not listed in *TIP IV* (Murphy, Conoley, & Impara, 1994), there is no alternative but to investigate every entry under Johnson as test author or under the many possible cognates of parent in the score index. With no initial success in finding any information on the PNM scale, the librarian ought to leave these tasks to the patron and move on to the next test bibliography in the flow chart. *Tests: A Comprehensive Reference for Assessments in Psychology, Education, and Business* (Sweetland & Keyser, 1991) has a narrower scope, which is indicated by its subtitle. Now in its third edition, *Tests* has several indexes that help in searching for specific tests. Among them are indexes for author, title, and tests gone out-of-print since the previous edition of *Tests*. Librarians must always keep in mind the possibility that Johnson's PNM (or any other test on which they are searching for information) may have once been a published test "quite a few years ago," as stated by the professor, but is now no longer in-print and available. Fortunately, *Tests* has the aforementioned out-of-print index.

A significant difference between these two bibliographies is that Sweetland and Keyser (1991) have arranged their book's entries alphabetically by test title within subject areas. Hence, there is no broad subject or score index as is found in Murphy, Conoley, and Impara (1994). There is an advantage to having the material arranged this way. When looking for instruments to utilize in their research or clinical practice, users of *Tests* can browse the contents not only by subject (*Marriage and Family* in the case of Johnson's PNM), but also within subject by broad age or educational level. In fact, *Tests in Print* (Buros, O.K., 1961), *Tests in Print II* (Buros, O.K., 1974), and the *MMYB* edited by Oscar K. Buros (1st-8th, 1938-1979) were, until the publication of *Tests in Print III* (Mitchell, 1983), also arranged alphabetically by title within subject area. Under Mitchell's editorship, *TIP III* and *The Ninth Mental Measurements Yearbook* (1985) were changed in format to answer criticism that their indexes were too cumbersome (Mitchell, 1987).

None of the entries under Johnson in the author index to *Tests* (Sweetland & Keyser, 1991) have anything to do with parent-child relationships. Before moving on to the next source, two caveats concerning *Tests* ought to be pointed out. First, with few exceptions, the editors have not included tests' dates of publication. Such information helps to identify a

particular test as well as show how old components of the in-print test may be. The second concern is that the price information for the tests and their accessory materials is often out-dated. Prices rarely remain the same from one year to the next even though the publisher has undertaken no further psychometric development of a test. Murphy, Conoley and Impara (1994) have indicated the dates of the testing materials' prices in *TIP IV*. If possible, the current publisher's catalog should be the source of choice to obtain up-to-date pricing.

Test Collection, a division of the Educational Testing Service, has developed a database of information on several thousand tests. Much of the information on these tests is published in a series of six monographs, collectively titled *The ETS Test Collection Catalog* (1989-1995). Each volume contains bibliographic and descriptive information on tests with the same general constructs. The volumes' subtitles give a good idea of their contents.

Volume 1: Achievement Tests and Measurement Devices, 2nd ed.
Volume 2: Vocational Tests and Measurement Devices, 2nd ed.
Volume 3: Tests for Special Populations.
Volume 4: Cognitive Aptitude and Intelligence Tests.
Volume 5: Attitude Measures.
Volume 6: Affective Measures and Personality Tests.

This series differs from *TIP IV* (Murphy, Conoley, & Impara, 1994) and *Tests* (Sweetland & Keyser, 1991) in that coverage is not restricted only to commercially available tests. Experimental research instruments are also entered into the ETS Test Collection's database. Hence, in the flow chart in Figure 1, this series is located in two places and is a primary source for information in both categories of tests. Each test entry is uniform in its format. Among the most important bits of information given are author, title, date of publication, target audience (i.e., age or grade levels of subjects for which the test is applicable), and source of availability. Each volume has indexes for author, title, and subject. The last index is based on terms taken from the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* (Houston, 1995).

To find information on Johnson's PNM scale, the librarian should first decide which of the six ETS volumes to search. If the PNM is used to define parent-child relationships, volumes five and six offer the best possibilities. The fifth volume, *Attitude Measures*, does not distinguish among the attitudes or opinions to be assessed, including parent-child relationships. And according to the introduction to the sixth volume, *Affective Measures*

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and Personality Tests, tests listed therein "are used to assess the psychological, social, and affective reactions of individuals to their environment" (p.*v*), including how parents might react to their children. Searching both volumes five and six for only a short time results in the determination that none of the entries under Johnson have anything to do with parenting or family counseling. Having searched the three main sources of bibliographic information on published tests and finding nothing, the librarian and the graduate student should begin to suspect that Johnson's PNM scale is probably not a commercially published instrument at all. Their attentions ought to shift to resources on unpublished instruments which are listed farther down in the flow chart.

Before doing so, some searchers might be tempted to investigate the two major review services listed in the flow chart with the published test bibliographies. These are Keyser and Sweetland's *Test Critiques* (1984-1994, hereafter referred to as *TC*), and *MMYB* (1938-1995), which has been under the direction of several editors. Reviews of tests are, of course, accompanied by bibliographic information on the instruments. But with its cross-referencing, *TIP IV* (Murphy, Conoley, & Impara, 1994) acts as an index to the tests reviewed in the first through the eleventh volumes of *MMYB*, so long as the tests were still in print when *TIP IV* was published. It must be pointed out, however, that few of the tests reviewed in the early volumes (i.e., first through the fifth or sixth) of *MMYB* are in print and would not have an entry in *TIP IV*. It also must be pointed out that the *Twelfth Mental Measurements Yearbook* (Conoley & Impara, 1995), published subsequently to *TIP IV*, must be consulted independently for reviews of recent tests. Because the librarian and the graduate student in this article's example could not find Johnson's PNM listed in *TIP IV* or the *Twelfth Mental Measurements Yearbook*, they may want to check under Johnson in *TIP III* (Mitchell, 1983) or even *TIP II* (Buros, 1974) to see if the instrument is listed there.

GENERAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON UNPUBLISHED EXPERIMENTAL INSTRUMENTS

Among these sources, *The ETS Test Collection Catalog* (1989-1995) is the easiest to search for information on unpublished tests. As mentioned above, there are author, title, and subject indexes in each of the six volumes, and a search of volumes five and six has yielded no information on Johnson's PNM. Before moving on to the next source, however, potential users of *The ETS Test Collection Catalog* should be warned of the reliability of some of the information found within the entry for an unpublished test. The introduction to the sixth volume, *Affective measures and personality tests* (p. *v*) includes the following paragraph:

> At the time the test catalog was compiled, all tests included were still available from the test distributors indicated in the availability source. However, distribution of certain tests may be discontinued by test publishers or distributors and new tests developed and published.

In the experience of the staff of the Iowa Testing Programs' library, this statement holds true for nearly all commercially published tests or those available directly from their authors. But when the source of availability is listed as a journal article or an ERIC document, the instrument's items are not always reproduced in that cited work. For example, with instruments cited in older issues of journals, the items may not be reproduced in the article. Such is the case with the Impression Formation Test (Streufert & Driver 1967). According to the entry for this test in the sixth volume of *The ETS Test Collection Catalog* (p.37), the Impression Formation Test is available in an issue of *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. But when searchers go to that issue, they will not find the fifteen items which make up this sentence-completion instrument. Potential users of this test are left either to recreate the items from their description in the article, or they must backtrack to an earlier publication in which an original form of the test is presented.

Already mentioned above, another important source of information on unpublished tests is *Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Measures* (Goldman et al., 1974-1995). Its scope is limited to instruments cited in approximately thirty to forty journals in the fields of behavioral and social science research. As indicated in the flow chart in Figure 1, this six-volume set covers 1970 to 1990. The preface to the fifth volume has the following statement: "In essence, this directory provides references to nonstandardized, experimental mental measures currently undergoing development" (p. *ix*).

Users of this reference work might believe that, should they find an instrument they are researching in these volumes, the test's location would be listed under *Source* in the entry. But much like the entries of the older experimental tests listed in *The ETS Test Collection Catalog* (1989-1995), the source only lists research based on the use of the instrument in question. Searchers must often backtrack from the cited work's own bibliography to find the original source of the test. Using the *Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Measures* can be frustrating until the user becomes familiar with its many idiosyncrasies, but the staff at the ITP library has found information on numerous obscure instruments nowhere else.

A new or infrequent user of the *Directory* should keep some caveats in mind. Its main flaw is that there is no title index in any of its volumes, and only volumes three through six provide author indexes. Entries are arranged by test title within subject categories, and these categories vary from volume to volume. Therefore, using the Johnson's PNM scale example, the author's last name is helpful only in four volumes. This and searching volumes one and two under the *Family* section yields no results.

Though it does not help to a great extent in finding information on Johnson's PNM, the *Directory* does have a detailed, cumulative subject index in the last volume. Much like a keyword index for monographs, research reports, or journal articles, the terms under which a test is entered in the subject index are taken from its title. The secret to using this index is to search under every significant word in the title even though some of the terms may yield nothing.

Because the graduate student searching for information on Johnson's PNM does not know how recent it is, some older reference works on experimental tests ought to be checked. *Measures of Psychological Assessment: A Guide to 3,000 Original Sources and Their Applications* (Chun, Cobb, & French, 1975) has a self-explanatory subtitle. Either the author or descriptor index must be consulted to access the information in the *Primary References* section in which the 3,000 instruments and their original sources are identified. Most of these sources are journal articles, but the authors found some instruments in non-journal publications, including published books, various organizations' research reports, or other monographic series of unpublished research.

Chun et al. (1975) arranged their 3,000 measures into twenty-six sub-divisions corresponding to the first letter of the surname of the first-named author of a test. Arrangement within each sub-division is by random accession number. For the example of Johnson's PNM, the librarian and the student do not know Johnson's first name or initial. But there are only sixteen entries under thirteen Johnsons in the author index (some authors have developed more than one instrument), so the search process ought not be lengthy using this index. None of the sixteen entries, however, yields an instrument which measures any aspect of the parent-child relationship or has a title whose acronym is PNM. Consulting the *Descriptor Index* under the term, parent, and its permutations yields a bewildering assortment of entries and cross-references. Searching under Johnson in the index of authors would suffice in this instance. ITP library staff have, at times, found the cumbersome Chun et al. (1975) to be of inestimable help in locating older instruments for patrons. The advantages of having information in one volume on unpublished tests, nearly all of which pre-date present electronic databases, far outweigh the difficulties in retrieving it.

The librarian and student do not know the exact constructs measured by Johnson's PNM. Because it could be an attitude measure (i.e., attitude of parents toward their children), they should not neglect consulting another source of information on unpublished tests. *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes* (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991) includes information on both experimental and commercially published instruments. It is a revision, in part, of *Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes* (Robinson & Shaver, 1973), long a cornerstone for research in attitude assessment in the social sciences. The focus of the later volume is information on scales which purport to measure different social science concepts. Examples of these concepts are self-reported well-being, self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and sex role. Entries for individual tests normally include descriptions, brief technical data, and locations of the instruments. What sets this source apart from the others is that the items from the scales are reproduced when the editors have obtained permission from publishers or authors. With some instruments, however, copyright owners have permitted only sample items to be listed.

This book does include some instruments used in the context of the parent-child relationship. With other resources utilized earlier in their search, the user could consult various indexes in each work. But Robinson et al. (1991) has a major flaw in its construction preventing a user from quickly identifying information on a specific test. There are no indexes to this book. In the example of Johnson's PNM scale, the searchers are reduced to scanning the eight-page table of contents which consumes more time than a quick check of even a rudimentary author index would. Robinson et al. has become a primary work for locating information about attitudinal measures in the social sciences. It is too important to be without a means to quickly access its contents. Unfortunately, Academic Press does not plan to reprint the book soon (N. Fine, personal communication, June 21, 1991), when an author index could be added similar to the one in its earlier edition. Until then, frequent users of Robinson et al. may want to utilize a simple author and title index by Jordan (1992), which has been independently published.

SPECIALIZED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

There are five sources that most large research and special testing libraries should have in their collections for research in family and marriage therapies. Though not specifically directed toward family assessment, *Measures for Clinical Practice: A Sourcebook* (Fischer & Corcoran, 1994) and *Gender Roles: A Handbook of Tests and Measures* (Beere, 1990a) both have sections of their texts devoted to assessment of

parenting. However, *Handbook of Measurements for Marriage & Family Therapy* (Fredman & Sherman, 1987), *Family Assessment: A Guide to Methods and Measures* (Grotevant & Carlson, 1989), and *Handbook of Family Measurement Techniques* (Touliatos, Perlmutter, & Straus, 1990) are three sources which the librarian and student should consult concerning Johnson's PNM scale. Touliatos et al. is the most comprehensive of these three books on family therapy and should be the first place to look for Johnson's PNM scale.

Touliatos et al. (1990) has author, title, and classified subject indexes. There are only five entries in the author index under the name of Johnson, so the time spent checking them will be brief. The last of these entries, indexed under "Johnson, S.M. & Lobitz, G.K." (p. 731), yields an instrument with the title of Parental Negativeness Measure and, thus, an acronym of PNM. The words, *Johnson's* and *scale,* are not even parts of the title. Hence, the original title designation of the instrument as *Johnson's PNM scale*, which the professor had given to the graduate student, has been somewhat misleading. A citation to a journal article at the end of a brief abstract gives the student a place from which to search further into the instrument's background and content. The librarian and the student have finally found the information for which they have patiently sought. With this specific title and authors' names, the searchers might also check other sources on family therapy for further information, but they will find the PNM is listed only in Touliatos et al.

Several sub-disciplines in the social and medical sciences also have specialized bibliographies of tests. *Measuring Health: A Guide to Rating Scales and Questionnaires* (McDowell & Newell, 1987) and *Handbook of Pain Assessment* (Turk & Melzack, 1992) are but two examples of books in which instruments useful to practitioners and researchers in medicine are discussed. And in the area of women's issues, researchers cannot overlook the above mentioned *Gender Roles: A Handbook of Tests and Measures* (Beere, 1990a) and *Sex and Gender Roles: A Handbook of Tests and Measures* (Beere, 1990b). This latter book, according to the author's introduction, is an update of her earlier *Women and Women's Issues: A Handbook of Tests and Measures* (Beere, 1979). In the field of vocational guidance counseling, *A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessment Instruments* (Kapes, Mastie & Whitfield, 1994), has proven a useful tool at the ITP library.

No discussion of specialized bibliographies would be complete without mentioning Educational Testing Service Test Collection's over 200 annotated bibliographies of tests. These bibliographies are based on the database from which the Test Collection's six volume *The ETS Test Collection Catalog* (1989-1995) is derived. Most of these bibliographies, however, supply information only on those tests applicable in a relatively narrow field. For example, in the Test Collection's *Complete Listing of Bibliographies* (1991), there is a

bibliography of tests specific to *Nurses*, and another for *Trucking Personnel, Drivers, Diesel Mechanics*. The coverage sometimes can be something quite broad, such as *Personality-General*. The frequency of updating each bibliography is determined somewhat by the rapidity of change within the area it covers. In other words, *Projective Measures* need not be revised as often as the more dynamic fields of *Achievement Batteries* and *Gifted and Talented Students*. If librarians do not have access to *The ETS Test Collection Catalog*, and they are repeatedly requested to find tests in a few narrowly defined fields, then a few of these bibliographies may suffice.

There is no attempt here to supply an exhaustive list of sources that are helpful for librarians in their endeavors to find information on tests in specialized fields. Rather, the preceding two paragraphs serve to illustrate the variety of print resources that can be utilized when faced with requests for quick facts or in-depth insights into the application of tests.

AUXILIARY SOURCES

When none of the above sources, including specialized bibliographies, yield information on a specific test, the researcher is left with either accessing various electronic databases or going to the print indexes and abstracts to find pertinent literature. *Current Index to Journals in Education, Education Index, Psychological Abstracts*, and *Social Sciences Index* are examples. The ITP library also maintains a file of test publishers' catalogs. Although it requires some knowledge of what kinds of tests certain publishers market, searching catalogs has been successful in finding answers to patrons' questions. Even after all print sources have been exhausted, members of the ITP library staff are sometimes stymied in their attempts to find information on particular tests. When the patrons know the names of test authors, staff members have used various associations' membership directories (i.e., American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, etc.) to find authors' telephone numbers or addresses and make direct contact with them. The staff has often used this procedure when attempting to locate a copy of an obscure experimental measure.

FURTHER CAVEATS FOR THOSE SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION ON TESTS

Some readers of this paper may wonder why the librarian did not immediately skip down the flowchart to specialized bibliographies in family therapy. At the beginning of the

search, after tenuous assumptions had been made that the PNM deals in some way with parenting, users familiar with the contents of Touliatos et al. (1990) may well have done so. But at the outset, neither the librarian nor the student knew whether the PNM were a commercially published test or an experimental measure. If the PNM had been a commercially published test, it would not have been listed in Touliatos et al. According to the book's introduction, the authors included only experimental instruments cited in journals (p. 9-10). The less librarians and researchers have to work with at the beginning of a search, the closer they should adhere to the flowchart in Figure 1. In this article's example, when the sources of information on commercially published tests were exhausted, and still believing that the PNM was concerned with parenting in some form, the searchers familiar with it might have felt confident in bypassing the general reference works on experimental measures and utilized Touliatos et al. with its more specialized coverage.

Lack of specificity in identifying titles of tests causes nearly as many problems for the ITP library staff as an incomplete author's name (e.g., Johnson's PNM). Mitchell (1987, p. 333) touches on this problem in his suggestions for librarians. At least once a semester, a patron will approach a staff member at the ITP library for help in finding information on what is invariably referred to as the LSI. Even when the patron identifies the title as "probably" the Learning Style Inventory, and says positively that it is commercially published, the reference interview is not over. In the third edition of *Tests* (Sweetland & Keyser, 1990), there are six tests listed with titles of either Learning *Style* Inventory or Learning *Styles* Inventory. And another Learning-Style Inventory authored by Kolb (1985) is not even listed in *Tests*. If the patron can supply an author's name, then the identification can be completed. But often researchers need to consult their original citations for that piece of information. The Learning Style (or Styles) Inventory is a good example of what complications can arise in doing reference work on tests.

Another phenomenon, especially among unpublished experimental measures, is what members of the ITP library staff call *test title drift*. For example, when first cited in a journal article, a test may be designated as Jordan's Measure of Attitudes Toward Cataloging. But the author of the article may modify the title by dropping Jordan from the instrument's name or referring to it only as Attitudes Toward Cataloging or by an acronym, such as the MAC. The modified test title may be understandable within the context of the article. But when indexers or authors of other works who cite the test must decide under which form of the title to place the instrument, it may not be the one under which future researchers will look. Cross references would help, but as repeatedly noted

above, most of the reference works on experimental measures are deficient in supplying adequate author, title, and subject indexes.

Authors sometimes commit test title drift when citing instruments in their works. A case in point is the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Fitts, 1964). In the fifth edition of *Assessment* (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 1991, p. 329), the test is referred to as the "Tennessee Self Concept Inventory" (Fitts, 1965). It may seem petty to find fault in the change of the last word of a test's title or have the date differ slightly from the copyright date listed on the test booklet. But the need for specificity in citing a title cannot be overemphasized. For example, both title and date are quite important when discriminating between the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck, H.J., & Eysenck, S.B.G., 1963) and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck, H.J., & Eysenck, S.B.G., 1975). Both of these commercially published tests are distinctly separate items. Yet, few weeks go by at the ITP library when patrons do not come in looking for something they call the Eysenck personality measure. Needless to say, a staff member handling the request must question the patron further before searching for bibliographic information or critical reviews.

So, as in the example of Johnson's PNM scale, researchers may not only approach the reference librarian with a test title inexact enough to cause confusion, but authors and editors of sources of information on tests are also sometimes inconsistent in citing instruments' titles in their works.

CONCLUSION

The reference staff of any library serving scholars and practitioners in the behavioral, social, and medical sciences will be periodically faced with the task of finding information on assessment instruments. Since the recent demise of some test-oriented databases available from vendors, such as BRS, and the ascendancy of computer networks, the type of information on tests retrievable from World Wide Web sites, such as the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements and the ERIC Clearinghous on Assessment and Evaluation, is in a state of flux. However, information that patrons seek is often available in the common sourcebooks discussed in this article. Those librarians who provide bibliographic instruction to graduate students in the aforementioned disciplines must also be familiar with these print sources. Each has its idiosyncrasies and limits of coverage. To librarians who do not use these sources daily, searching for information can be frustrating and time-consuming. But with a coherent search strategy, and only a few pieces of specific bibliographic information, librarians can guide patrons through the maze of reference works on assessment.

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REVISED: February 1996